DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 345 457 EC 301 218

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TITLE A Needs-Assessment of Agencies Serving Individuals with Deaf-Blindness: A National Profile of Transitional Services.
INSTITUTION Helen Keller National Center - Technical Assistance Center, Sands Point, NY.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE Jan 92
CONTRACT H025E90001
NOTE 65p.; For a related document, see EC 301 217.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Agency Cooperation; Change Strategies; *Deaf Blind; Delivery Systems; High Schools; *Holistic Approach; Human Services; Integrated Activities; National Surveys; *Needs Assessment; Postsecondary Education; Professional Education; Program Administration; Rehabilitation; *Social Integration; Staff Development; Teamwork; *Technical Assistance; *Transitional Programs; Young Adults; Youth

ABSTRACT

A national needs assessment of 719 educational and adult service agencies providing or proposing to provide transitional services to individuals with deaf-blindness was conducted to determine national and regional technical assistance needs. On average, each agency expressed a need for technical assistance in 20 separate areas. In the area of general client outcomes, respondents reported the greatest need for technical assistance in employment and family support. In the area of specific direct services, respondents requested aid in assistive technology, client assessment/evaluation, and communication training. In the area of systems/administrative issues, respondents indicated the greatest need in personnel training, public education/awareness, funding, and interagency collaboration. Findings also indicated that agencies continue to organize the constellation of services they offer using an isolated skills training and "readiness" approach. Infusion of all transitional services within community-integrated adult activities and outcomes continues to be an elusive service delivery model. The report recommends that future funding priorities and technical assistance activities aggressively promote holistic and visionary community-integrated client planning along with broad systematic and administrative interagency change supports. One recommended approach is the use of technical assistance and support to state and local level interagency teams, whose goals are to develop, implant, and maintain statewide and collaboration transition efforts for youth with deaf-blindness. (10 references) (Author/JDD)

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A Needs-Assessment of Agencies Serving Individuals With Deaf-Blindness: A National Profile of Transitional Services

January, 1992

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EC 301218

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A NEEDS-ASSESSMENT OF AGENCIES SERVING INDIVIDUALS WITH DEAF-BLINDNESS:

A NATIONAL PROFILE OF TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

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The development and dissemination of this document was supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Education (Cooperative Agreement #H025E90001). The opinions expressed are entirely those of the authors. No official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education is intended or should be inferred.

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Abstract

In 1989, the Helen Keller National Center-Technical Assistance Center administered a national needs-assessment of educational and adult service agencies providing or proposing to provide transitional services to individuals with labels of deaf-blindness. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the national and regional technical assistance needs of current and potential providers of transitional services to individuals with dual sensory impairment.

Usable questionnaires were returned by 719 of 1059 agencies (a 67.9% response rate). The results represent the most comprehensive national needs-assessment conducted to date of agencies serving individuals with deaf-blindness. On average each agency, among the 719 agencies surveyed, expressed a need for technical assistance in 20 separate areas. In the area of general client outcomes, respondents requested the greatest need for technical assistance in employment opportunities and family support. In the area of specific direct services, respondents requested the greatest need for technical assistance in assistive technology, client assessment/evaluation, and communication training. In the area of systems/administrative issues, respondents requested the greatest need for technical assistance in personnel training, public education/awareness, funding, and interagency collaboration. More troubling than the overwhelming need for transitional services technical assistance nationally, however, is the way in which agencies continue to organize the constellation of services they offer. Services continue to be offered using an isolated skills training and "readiness" approach. Infusion of **all** transitional services within community-integrated adult activities and outcomes continues to be an elusive service delivery model. Future funding priorities and technical assistance activities must aggressively promote holistic and visionary community-integrated client planning along with broad systematic and administrative interagency change supports. One recommended approach, supported by this data, is the use of technical assistance

and support to state and local level interagency teams, whose goals are to develop, implant, and maintain state-wide and collaboration transition efforts for youth with deaf-blindness (Everson, Rachal, & Michael, 1992).

Acknowledgements

An undertaking of this size and scope would not have been possible without the assistance and support of many HKNC staff and other professionals. We would especially like to thank the HKNC Regional Representatives and Affiliates who took the time to review the needs-assessment instrument and provide feedback during the expert panel and pilot testing phases. In addition Dr. Michael Shafer of the University of Arizona provided valuable assistance with methodology procedures.

Data analysis would not have been possible without the efforts of HKNC-TAC Program Associate, Janet Steveley and Queens College student, Roseann Costa. Many, many thanks as well to the personnel in the 719 respondent agencies who took the time to complete "yet another survey."

Thanks to HKNC-TAC's Administrative Assistant, Vivian Nixon, for her patience and endurance through many, many drafts of this document. And finally, we thank Mr. Charles Freeman, previous HKNC-TAC Project Officer, and Dr. Sara Conlon, HKNC-TAC's current Project Officer, who have supported our efforts over the past six years.

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A Needs-Assessment of Agencies Serving Individuals with Deaf-Blindness: A National Profile of Transitional Services

Introduction

Since the mid-1960s when deaf-blind services were first identified as a federal priority, educational and adult services for these individuals have developed and expanded tremendously. Changes became especially apparent in the mid-1980s when transition, the process of transferring youth with all levels of disabilities from special education programs to adult service agencies received considerable attention. Today, community-based services and outcomes achieved through client-centered planning describe a "*best practice*" approach to transitional services for individuals with deaf-blindness.

Transitional services bridge the gap between educational and adult services. They include educational preparation services to assist children and young adults with acquiring skills needed to live, work, and play in their home communities. They also include family support services needed by young adults to ensure success in community living, working, and recreation options. Comprehensive transitional services encompass an unlimited set of "*best practices*" including daily living skills training, self-preservation training, job development and placement, assistive technology, job site training and support, personal futures planning, case management, and family and sibling support. By their very definition, "*best practices*" are difficult to implement and sustain. They require personnel with a high level of expertise, creativity, and resourcefulness. They require agency commitment to visionary and systemic changes in client outcomes and service delivery. And they require the development of parent and professional partnerships.

As community-based services and outcomes became widely accepted, new roles and responsibilities for agency personnel have begun to emerge. Programmatic emphasis on community-based transitional services requires staff with expertise in, among other things, developing community-integrated jobs, developing functional communication systems, using non-aversive behavior management procedures, using partial participation and other systematic instructional strategies, implementing personal futures planning strategies, and building interagency coalitions (e.g., Downing & Eichinger, 1990; Everson & Burwell, 1991; Everson, Rachal, & Michael, 1991; Goetz, Lee, Johnston, & Gaylord-Ross, 1991).

Training and technical assistance efforts nationally have been successful in introducing "*best practices*" to professionals and parents. But unfortunately, the gap between professional *knowledge* of "*best practices*" and *application* of practices in community-based client outcomes is great and continues to grow (Kaiser & McWhorter, 1990). The bottom line is, nationally, large numbers of individuals with deaf-blindness do **not** experience quality educational and adult services in community settings (e.g., Bullis & Otis, 1988; Wagner, 1989).

In 1989, the Helen Keller National Center-Technical Assistance Center (HKNC-TAC) administered a national needs-assessment of educational and adult service agencies providing or proposing to provide transitional services to individuals with labels of deaf-blindness or dual sensory impairment. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the national and regional technical assistance needs of current and potential providers of transitional services to individuals with deaf-blindness. Several research questions were initially posed: 1) In what areas is technical assistance most required by agencies that provide services to those with deaf-blindness? 2) How great is the need for Technical Assistance when a need is indicated? 3) Do agencies within RSA regions provide equal services to individuals with deaf-blindness and do technical assistance needs differ by region? 4) How are Technical Assistance needs met? and 5)How do agencies group their

transitional services? As a result, this profile provides data describing the most comprehensive national needs-assessment survey to date of educational and adult service agencies and their technical assistance needs in the area of transitional services for youth with deaf-blindness.

The results of this needs-assessment have tremendous implications for programs serving individuals with deaf-blindness. The purpose of this manuscript is twofold, first, to describe the methods and results of this needs-assessment; and second, to draw implications for future personnel training and federal and state policies for services to individuals with deaf-blindness.

Methods

Needs-Assessment Instrument

A needs-assessment instrument allowing a maximum of 90 responses was developed to gather information in three areas: *characteristics of the responding agency; technical assistance needs in the area of transitional services; and use of training resources*. The instrument contained both open-ended and close-ended questions. Open-ended questions allowed respondents to give short, written answers and make additional comments. Close-ended questions required respondents to choose from *yes/no* responses or from a list of descriptors.

Items in all three areas were developed following a literature review on quality indicators of educational and adult services for individuals with deaf-blindness (e.g., Covert & Carr, 1988; Goetz, Guess, & Campbell, 1987). The draft instrument was subject to an expert panel review of 10 individuals representing special educators, parents, adult service providers, and university trainers. All panel members were selected because of their familiarity with transitional services for individuals with deaf-blindness and/or personnel training and survey research. As a result of the expert panel review, extensive revisions were made to the instrument. The revised instrument was subsequently piloted with a group of 10 educational and adult service providers. Minimal revisions were made as a result of pilot testing.

Sample

HKNC-TAC maintains an extensive national database of professionals providing educational and adult services to individuals with deaf-blindness. However, to ensure both completeness and accuracy of this database, names and addresses of educational programs and adult service agencies including titles of personnel providing services were verified through a series of telephone and

written communication and comparisons with other national mailing lists. The database included programs and agencies from all 50 states, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, The American Virgin Islands, Guam, and the Trust Territories.

PROCEDURES

In August of 1990, 2465 questionnaires were mailed to all educational and adult service personnel on HKNC-TAC's mailing list. For all professionals **not** responding to the initial questionnaire, a second wave questionnaire was mailed in October of 1990. In many instances, questionnaires were mailed to more than one service provider in an agency. However, the unit of analysis for this study was *service-provision agencies*, not *service providers*. Therefore at this point, professionals were grouped according to the agencies they represented. If at least one professional had responded from an agency, no further questionnaires were mailed. In December of 1990, for all agencies with *no* respondents, a third-wave questionnaire was mailed. In all instances where more than one professional responded from a single agency, the results were pooled across all respondents. Data collection procedures were closed in February of 1991.

A final check was performed after questionnaires were received to ensure that selected agencies potentially could provide educational or adult services to individuals with deaf-blindness. In the questionnaire, respondents were asked to identify the primary service offered by their agency: education, rehabilitation, residential, planning, or advocacy; and whether they offered each of four client outcomes and 20 direct services. Agencies that offered *none* of the five primary services, and also offered *none* of the four client outcomes or the 20 direct services were excluded from the pool of eligible agencies and from the study.

Results

Sample Characteristics

This survey represents the most comprehensive national needs-assessment conducted to date of agencies that serve individuals with deaf-blindness. Questionnaires were mailed to 1059 eligible agencies. Usable questionnaires were returned by 719 of the 1059 agencies for an overall response rate of 67.9%, as detailed in Table 1. Data were obtained from all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Trust Territories, Guam, and American Samoa. The ten Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) regions are all well represented. Region IV (Southeastern) produced the most responding agencies, 129: the fewest were obtained in Region VII (Great Plains), 28. Region X (Northwestern), provided the best response rate, 75.6%: the lowest is found in Region IV (Southeastern), 60.6%.

The broad array of agencies types that serve individuals with deaf-blindness are also well represented. Respondents placed their agency within 13 fixed-choices or "Other." For analysis, responses were grouped into eight broader categories, Table 2. **Over two-thirds of the respondents (71.5%) provide Rehabilitation (27.7%), Education (23.5%), or Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities services (20.3%). The remainder worked at: Centers for Independent Living (5.7%), Advocacy organizations (4.3%), Social Service agencies (3.5%), Developmental Disability Councils (2.4%), or in other agencies (12.6%).**

TABLE 1.
ADJUSTED RESPONSE RATE BY RSA REGION AND STATE

Region and State	Number of Agencies Contacted	Number of Responding Agencies	Response Rate
Region I.: New England	**96**	**69**	**71.9**
Connecticut	15	11	73.3
Massachusetts	25	20	80.0
Maine	10	5	50.0
New Hampshire	10	8	80.0
Rhode Island	25	17	68.0
Vermont	11	8	72.7
Region II.: Mid Atlantic	**102**	**73**	**71.6**
New Jersey	20	13	65.0
New York	67	53	79.1
Puerto Rico	6	3	50.0
Virgin Islands	9	4	44.4
Region III.: East Central	**98**	**69**	**70.4**
Delaware	9	7	70.0
District of Columbia	10	7	72.2
Maryland	18	13	63.6
Pennsylvania	33	21	71.4
Virginia	14	10	58.8
West Virginia	14	11	78.6
Region IV.: Southeastern	**213**	**129**	**60.6**
Alabama	13	7	53.8
Florida	22	15	68.2
Georgia	39	24	61.5
Mississippi	12	7	58.3
Kentucky	30	16	53.3
North Carolina	46	31	67.4
South Carolina	14	9	64.3
Tennessee	37	20	54.1
Region V.: North Central	**125**	**78**	**62.4**
Illinois	21	14	66.7
Indiana	14	11	78.6
Ohio	36	19	52.8
Michigan	17	8	47.1
Minnesota	24	16	66.7
Wisconsin	13	10	76.9

TABLE 1.
RESPONSE RATE BY RSA REGION AND STATE, Continued

Region and State	Number of Agencies Contacted	Number of Responding Agencies	Response Rate
Region VI.: South Central	**95**	**71**	**74.7**
Arkansas	15	10	66.7
Louisiana	12	9	75.0
New Mexico	15	10	66.7
Oklahoma	14	12	85.7
Texas	40	30	75.0
Region VII.: Great Plains	**42**	**28**	**66.7**
Iowa	12	8	66.7
Kansas	11	7	63.6
Missouri	15	11	73.3
Nebraska	4	2	50.0
Region VIII.: Rocky-Mountain	**93**	**67**	**72.0**
Colorado	20	15	75.0
Montana	4	1	25.0
North Dakota	16	12	75.5
South Dakota	18	16	88.9
Utah	25	16	64.0
Wyoming	10	7	70.0
Region IX.: Southwestern	**115**	**73**	**63.5**
Arizona	54	34	63.0
California	27	18	66.7
Guam, Samoa, and the Trust Territories	18	7	38.9
Hawaii	13	11	84.6
Nevada	6	3	50.0
Region X.: Northwestern	**82**	**62**	**75.6**
Alaska	16	13	81.2
Idaho	16	13	81.2
Oregon	24	20	83.3
Washington	24	16	66.7
TOTAL	**1059**	**719**	**67.9**

TABLE 2.
TYPES OF AGENCIES IN SAMPLE.

Agency Type	N	%
Education	**169**	**23.5**
Private Education	16	2.2
Local Education	48	6.7
State Education	105	14.6
MH/MR/DD	**146**	**20.3**
Mental Health	7	1.0
MR/DD	139	19.3
Vocational Rehabilitation	**199**	**27.7**
Public Vocational Rehabilitation	38	5.3
Private Vocational Rehabilitation	156	21.7
HKNC	4	.6
HKNC/Regional Representative	1	.1
Center for Independent Living	**41**	**5.7**
Advocacy	**31**	**4.3**
Social Service	**25**	**3.5**
Higher Education/Other	**91**	**12.6**
Higher Education	14	1.9
Other	77	10.7
Developmental Disability Council	**17**	**2.4**
	---	---.--
TOTAL	**719**	**100.0%**

When asked to indicate the primary service their agency offers, many respondents were able to signify one from among five fixed choices and "Other." However, some respondents noted that their agency extended multiple primary services to clients. On average, respondents indicated 1.51 primary services per agency (standard deviation = .98), Table 3. When the "Other" category is excluded leaving only the remaining 5 choices, respondents report a mean of 1.38 primary services per agency (standard deviation = .83). Almost half of all respondents (46.2%) indicated "rehabilitation" was among their agency's primary responsibilities followed by "education" (35.9%), "residential" services (25.2%), and "advocacy" (19.6%).

Most agencies described here currently serve individuals with deaf-blindness. **Of the 719 agencies participating in this survey, 612 provided information on this item, and 490 agencies report currently providing transitional services to individuals with deaf-blindness, as described in Table 4.** The remaining agencies either have provided services to those who are dual-sensory impaired in the past or offer services that would benefit these clients if they were referred to the agencies. One-hundred-and-seven agencies provided no information on this question, the highest non-response rate for any item in the questionnaire. We believe this omission reflects the conflicting and confusing definitions of deaf-blindness across agencies and states, making it difficult to determine precise numbers. Some agencies serve the entire age spectrum. But, it is more typical to serve clients in each of the survey's four age ranges (0-17, 18-21, 22-25, 26+). The 490 agencies currently serving individuals with deaf-blindness give assistance to a median of eight clients per agency with a mean of 39.44 clients. These statistics describe a distribution that is skewed by very high scores. Some agencies serve a single client with deaf-blindness, while others report serving over 1200. This skew is the result of a number of state-wide agencies responding to the questionnaire, but also reflects the confusion surrounding the label deaf-blindness.

TABLE 3.
PRIMARY PURPOSE OF AGENCIES.

Agency's Primary Purpose	N°	%a
Education	261	35.9%
Rehabilitation	338	46.2%
Residential	182	25.2%
Planning	80	11.0%
Advocacy	141	19.6%
Other	94	12.9%
	1096	150.8%

a. The totals are greater than 719 agencies and 100% because some agencies checked more than one primary purpose.

TABLE 4.
EXTENT TO WHICH SAMPLED AGENCIES CURRENTLY SERVE CLIENTS WITH DUAL-SENSORY IMPAIRMENT.

	Including agencies with zero clients			NOT including agencies with zero clients		
Age	Mean	Median	N	Mean	Median	N
0-17	10.42	0.00	612[a]	24.62	6.00	259
18-21	4.52	0.00	612	11.11	4.00	249
22-25	4.26	0.00	612	10.72	3.00	243
26+	12.38	0.00	612	25.78	5.00	294
Total Clients with Dual Sensory Impairment	**31.58**	**4.00**	**612**	**39.44**	**8.00**	**490**

a. The sample is reduced from 719 to 612 because 107 agencies failed to provide data for this question.

THE NEEDS-ASSESSMENT

Providing transitional services is a complicated and changing process. Descriptions of quality educational and adult services are constantly evolving and programmatic indicators of client outcomes emerge almost daily. Along with changing *"best practices"* and client outcomes, agencies providing services to clients with deaf-blindness face low-incidence client support needs, service provider skill and recruitment limitations, and funding availability as well as routine day-to-day systems and administrative tasks. The most fundamental question addressed in this survey is: *In what areas is technical assistance most required by agencies that provide services to those with deaf-blindness*? The data suggest three basic answers: 1) technical assistance is greatly needed in every one of the 35 direct service areas considered; 2) technical assistance is being requested in the most frequently delivered service areas simply because these services are offered so frequently; and 3) technical assistance is especially required in the ***least frequency delivered service areas*** because these are areas where programs realize expansion is needed the most to meet *"best practices"* expectations.

Because there is an inextricable link between the two, we considered both client outcomes and services where technical assistance is required and the level of currently offered transitional services. In the survey, transitional services offered occurred under two headings: *Client Outcomes* (4 items) and *Direct Services* (20 items), and technical assistance needs occurred under four: *Client Outcomes* (4 items), *Direct Services* (20 items), *Systems Issues* (3 items), and *Administrative Programmatic Services* (8 items).

Let us first consider the services agencies offer clients with deaf-blindness. In each of the 4 Client Outcomes and the 20 Direct Services, respondents indicated whether their agency offered the outcome or service and the degree (*"a lot," "some," "none"*) to which the agency needed technical assistance. In Table 5, Column A outcomes and services are ranked, by category, in descending order reflecting how widely each is offered. Among Client Outcomes, almost two-thirds (65.0%)

of all agencies provide "Employment Options" closely followed by "Family Support Services" (62.3%). Somewhat less offered are: "Integrated Recreational/Leisure Options" (54.1%), and "Community Living Options" (42.6%).

Respondents indicate wide variations across the 20 types of Direct Services. For example, 596 agencies (82.9%) provided "Client Assessment/Evaluation," which was closely followed by "Advocacy" (76.8%), "Daily Living Skills Training" (75.7), "Communication Training" (73.7%), and "Social Skills Training" (73.4%). On the other hand very few agencies offered "Financial/Estate Planning" (15.7%) or "Community-Based Medical Services" (29.5%). Eighteen agencies offered all 20 Direct Services; three agencies offered no direct services.

TABLE 5.
SERVICES OFFERED AND NEED FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SAMPLED AGENCIES.

	A		B		B/A	C	D
	Offer Service		Need TA		% Need TA / % Offer Service	# Agencies Both Offering Service And Needing TA	# Agencies Needing TA But NOT Offering Service
	N	%	N	%			
Client Outcomes							
Employment Options	467	65.0	440	61.2	.94	354	86
Family Support Services	448	62.3	416	57.8	.93	315	101
Integrated Recreational /Leisure Options	389	54.1	403	56.1	1.04	291	112
Community Living Options	306	42.6	383	53.3	1.25	224	159
Direct Services							
Client Assessment/ Evaluation	596	82.9	436	60.6	.73	415	21
Advocacy	552	76.8	398	55.4	.72	357	41
Daily Living Skills Training	544	75.7	405	56.3	.74	368	37
Communication Training	530	73.7	426	59.2	.80	377	49
Social Skills Training	528	73.4	414	57.6	.78	366	48
Transition Planning	502	69.8	412	58.9	.82	353	68
Case Management	486	67.6	355	49.4	.73	301	54
Psychological/Social Counseling	452	62.9	380	52.9	.84	303	77
Job Development/ Placement	452	62.9	413	57.4	.91	335	78

TABLE 5, Continued.
SERVICES OFFERED AND NEED FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SAMPLED AGENCIES.

	A		B		B/A	C	D
	Offer Service		Need TA		% Need TA / % Offer Service	# Agencies Both Offering Service And Needing TA	# Agencies Needing TA But NOT Offering Service
	N	%	N	%			
Assistive Technology	451	62.7	443	61.6	.98	355	88
Mobility Training	448	62.3	380	52.9	.85	293	87
Job Site Training/Support	447	62.2	410	57.0	.92	331	79
Educational Services	442	61.5	357	49.6	.81	291	66
Behavior Management	441	61.3	380	52.9	.86	299	81
Personal Futures Planning	395	54.9	392	54.5	.99	281	111
Parent Education/ Training	361	50.2	392	54.5	1.09	259	133
Self-Preservation Training	342	47.6	361	50.2	1.06	241	120
Family/Sibling Support	327	45.5	368	51.2	1.13	232	136
Community-Based Medical Services	212	29.5	229	31.8	1.08	107	123
Financial/Estate Planning	113	15.7	260	36.2	2.30	77	183

TABLE 5, Continued.
SERVICES OFFERED AND NEED FOR
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR SAMPLED AGENCIES.

	Need TA N	Need TA %
Systems Issues		
Maintaining Interagency Collaboration	404	56.2
Initiating Interagency Collaboration	401	55.8
Establishing Interagency Direction/Focus	379	52.7
Administrative/Programmatic Services		
Personnel Training	533	74.1
Public Education/Awareness	513	71.3
Funding	512	71.2
Legislation/Regulations	455	63.3
Personnel Recruitment/Supervision	421	58.6
Population Identification/Registry	403	56.1
Management Style	367	51.0
Developing Case Management System	361	50.2
Other	33	4.6

At first glance, these findings are very impressive but they should be interpreted cautiously. For example, because communication deficits are such a significant consequence of deaf-blindness, it is impressive to find that almost three-quarters of these agencies (N = 530) offer communication training as a direct service. Most individuals with deaf-blindness, therefore, have a reasonable chance of living close enough to an agency to receive some form of communications training. But there are still many who do not live close enough, and there are still many others who may live close, but who may not be referred for services because of administrative or systems concerns (e.g., interagency collaboration, funding, population identification/registry). Furthermore, this survey provides no measure of service quality. For example, communication training is a very complicated service to deliver. It is unlikely that many agencies will have full personnel competencies and other resources in the area. Depending on the etiology of the disability, those with deaf-blindness may need both expressive and receptive training with one or several of the following: sign language, tactile signing, braille, finger spelling, speech reading, print-on-palm, tadoma, gestural systems, picture/photo communication, written notes, pre-written cards, raised alphabet cards, tellatouch machines, tactile speech indicators, or electronic devices. Given the low-incidence of deaf-blindness, it is unlikely that many agencies will permanently have staff on hand who are expert in the full range of communication techniques. In addition, as stated earlier, technology and best practices in communication training change almost daily, making it difficult for even the most experienced personnel to stay abreast of current technology and practices.

Although communication training is a complex service, it is still a typical transitional service. Provision of each transitional service, according to "*best practices*" requires a broad spectrum of knowledge and ability. Our discussion of communication training exemplifies the complexity of delivery for **any** services to individuals with dual sensory impairment.

Column B presents agency technical assistance needs by category: Client Outcomes, Direct Services, Systems Issues, and Administrative/Programmatic Services. **Agencies report a tremendous level of technical assistance need. Over half the agencies indicated a need for technical assistance in 31 of the 35 areas covered by the survey**. This finding comes as no surprise. A high level of technical assistance needs is a consequence of agencies offering many complicated transitional services. It is further complicated by personnel recruitment issues, a low-incidence population of individuals with diverse support needs and desired adult outcomes, and evolving technology and practices.

The general trend within Client Outcomes and Direct Services is for respondents to report technical assistance needs in direct relation to service provision. Within Client Options, the rank ordering is identical and the percentage of agencies offering each service is similar to the percentage of agencies needing technical assistance. Within Direct Services the trend is the same but less strong. In Column B, the range is less than in Column A -- there is less variation in technical assistance needs among agencies than there is variation in service provision. A preliminary conclusion, is that for the most frequently offered services, agencies are forced to develop a self-sufficiency that reduces, but does not eliminate, their need for technical assistance. The caveat should be made once again that this survey does not assess quality of provided outcomes and services.

Respondents indicate there are some areas in which their agencies require the greatest levels of technical support. They are: Client Outcomes -- "Employment" (61.2%) and "Family Support" (57.8%); Direct Services -- "Assistive Technology" (61.6%), "Client Assessment/Evaluation" (60.6%), and "Communication Training" (59.2%); Systems Issues -- "Maintaining Interagency Collaboration" (56.2%), Initiating Interagency Collaboration (55.8%), and "Establishing Interagency Direction/Focus" (52.7%); and finally Administrative/Programmatic Services -- "Personnel Training"

(71.3%), "Public Education/Awareness" (71.3%), and"Funding" (71.2).

The need for technical assistance may be viewed, for the most part, as a reasonably smooth continuum. Even though some areas occur at the top of the list, other technical assistance needs receive just a few percentage points less across the entire set of areas. There is no natural break suggesting that areas above the break require increase technical assistance and those below the break do not. This is probably explained by the close interdependence between many direct services, client outcomes, and systems and administrative issues.

Also consider that respondents identify very few areas with low technical assistance needs. As is seen in columns B/A, C, and D, it would be a mistake to conclude the areas with the lowest numbers in column A have the lowest need for technical assistance. These three columns consider the relationship between service provision and technical assistance needs. Each column shows, in slightly different ways, the expanding need for technical assistance in community integration programs and other less traditional services. Column B/A is the ratio of Column A divided by Column B. A number above 1.00 indicates more agencies need technical assistance than provide the service. On the other hand, ratios below 1.00 indicate that there are fewer agencies that need assistance than offer the service. These ratios may be interpreted to indicate the relative extent to which agencies providing a service are able to do so without technical assistance. The lower the ratio, the more self-sufficient the agency pool perceives itself to be on a given dimension. Among Client Outcomes, agencies are most self-sufficient on "Employment Options" and "Family Support Services". Among Direct Services, agencies are most self-sufficient in "Advocacy," "Client Assessment/Evaluation," and "Case Management." None of these ratios is particularly low, indicating that the agency pool as a whole has not developed a sense of self-sufficiency in any of the 35 areas considered. The need for technical assistance, therefore, runs across this broad and exhaustive range of areas.

Column B/A, the ratio of agencies that provide services to those that need technical assistance, does not show whether agencies that provide a service are the same ones that want technical assistance. It is hypothetically possible that there is little overlap between agencies that offer a service and agencies that request technical assistance. Column C shows the extent of overlap. **A rough summary is that about three-fourths of agencies that offer each service request technical assistance for that service**. This ratio is reasonably constant across services.

Column D considers agencies that **do not** currently offer a service but **do** request technical assistance. This column may be interpreted as the extent to which the pool of agencies is interested in expanding its service-provision ability -- the more agencies that do not offer the service now but that want technical assistance, the more the pool of agencies is interested in expanding the service. Within Client Outcomes, for example, there are 159 agencies that do not offer "Community Living Options", but want technical assistance. This contrasts with the much fewer 86 agencies that do not provide "Employment Options", but want technical assistance. Importantly, this example illustrates that agencies are more interested in expanding their offerings among services that stress community- integration than in more traditional areas.

A more striking finding occurs in Direct Services where, in column D, it is found that 183 agencies that do not now provide "Financial/Estate Planning" request technical assistance. **"Financial/Estate Planning" is the single direct service area where there is the most interest in service expansion**. Other areas that also show great need for increased technical assistance are: "Family/Sibling Support" (136 agencies), "Parent-Education/Training (133 agencies), "Community-Based Medical Services" (123 agencies), "Self-Preservation Training" (120 agencies), and "Personal Futures Planning" (111 agencies).

Table 5 also considers Systems and Administrative/Programmatic Services. Respondents were asked if they needed technical assistance but not if they provided these services to clients

because these services are not direct client outcomes or services, but instead support comprehensive transitional services planning and delivery. About half the agencies surveyed requested technical assistance for each of the three Systems issues: "Maintaining Interagency Collaboration" (56.2%), Initiating Interagency Collaboration" (55.8%), and "Establishing Interagency Direction/Focus" (52.7%).

For the final category, Administrative/Programmatic Services, the number of agencies indicating a need for technical assistance are rank ordered. Half or more of the surveyed agencies indicated a need for technical assistance in each area. Technical assistance was most requested in "Personnel Training" (74.1%), "Public Education/Awareness" (71.3%), and "Funding" (71.2%).

Table 6 summarizes some of the information found in Table 5 by providing overall statistics on services offered and technical assistance needs. The average agency provides service in 2.24 (of 4) Client Outcomes and in 11.99 (of 20) Direct Services. In other words, **the "typical agency" provides services in over half of the 35 areas listed**. The standard deviations for these means are all large indicating that there is a great deal of variability between agencies -- some provide many services while others specialize in only a few.

TABLE 6.
MEAN SERVICES OFFERED AND
NEED FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

			Needs Technical Assistance					
	Offer Service		Total Need a.		Needs A Lot Of TA		Need Some TA	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Client Options	2.24	1.37	2.28	1.65	1.03	1.36	1.26	1.37
Direct Services	11.99	5.16	10.60	7.34	4.38	5.45	6.22	5.71
Systems	-	-	1.65	1.43	.62	1.16	1.03	1.32
Administrative Programmatic	-	-	5.02	2.94	2.14	2.52	2.88	2.44

a. "Some" and "A Lot" counted equally.

On average, agencies request technical assistance in 2.28 (of 4) Client Outcomes, in 10.60 (of 20) Direct Services, in 1.65 (of 3) Systems Issues, and in 5.02 (of 8) Administrative Programmatic Services. Again, **the "typical agency" requests technical assistance in over half of all the areas listed.**

The statistics presented above indicate how much technical assistance agencies report needing. They do **not** answer the question: *How great is the need for technical assistance when a need is indicated*? The survey measured the need for technical assistance within three levels: *"a lot,"* *"some,"* and *"none."* A slightly greater percentage of agencies indicate they need only "some" technical assistance compared to those that need "a lot". As a rough approximation the ratio is 60/40 (some - a lot, respectively).

Tables 5 and 6 demonstrate that agencies provide a large number of services to clients with deaf-blindness and that they believe a high level of technical assistance is needed to support their efforts. There is a high level of technical assistance needs across the entire spectrum of survey areas. Those that at first appear to have the lowest technical assistance needs, are shown to be those areas that are expanding the fastest. Therefore, it would be incorrect to put them at the bottom of the list of areas that require attention.

It might be expected that different types of agencies provide different kinds and differing numbers of services. In Table 7 level of service provision is shown to greatly vary by agency type. On average, agencies offer 2.24 client outcomes and 11.99 Direct Services. MH/MR/DD agencies offer the greatest level of both client outcomes (mean = 3.18 of a total of 4) and direct services (mean = 13.76 of a total of 20). Educational and vocational rehabilitation agencies also offer large numbers of services. On the other hand, advocacy and developmental disability councils are very specialized and typically offer few services: 1 and 1.59 client options and, 4.35 and 4.76 direct services, respectively.

Technical assistance needs appear to vary greatly by agency type, Table 8, but this variation is mostly artifactual. On average, agencies show technical assistance needs in 2.28 (of 4) categories of Client Outcomes, in 10.60 (of 20) categories of Direct Services, in 1.43 (of 3) Systems Issues and in 5.02 (of 8) categories of Administrative/Programmatic Services. Roughly speaking, agencies offer services and need technical assistance in half of the exhaustive list of categories offered in the survey.

Education, MH/MR/DD, Vocational Rehabilitation, Centers for Independent Living, and Social Service agencies all express high needs. Because this group of agencies accounts for over four-fifths of all surveyed agencies (580/719 = 80.7%), it is clear that most agencies and most types of agencies have high technical-assistance needs. But, the agencies that first appear to have low technical assistance needs (e.g., Advocacy with a mean of only 3.19 areas of technical assistance needs from the 20 areas of direct services) do so mostly because they are specialized in function and offer fewer services. Thus, **the best interpretation is that all agency types have high technical assistance needs which vary by how many services they offer**.

The Geographical Distribution of Service Provision and Technical Assistance Needs

One way of viewing the nation's organization of transitional services to persons with deaf-blindness is the geographically based Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) regions. RSA regions encompass all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Trust Territories. We posed two questions: *Do agencies within RSA regions provide equal service levels to individuals with deaf-blindness? Do technical assistance needs differ by region?*

These data exhibit few statistically significant differences between regions in the provision of direct services, Table 9, but there are a few important exceptions. The chi-square statistic was used to test the hypothesis of no difference between RSA regions for Client Outcomes and Direct Services. Using a .05 level of significance and 9 degrees of freedom, significant differences were found for two (of 4) Client Outcomes: "Integrated Recreational/Leisure Options" and "Community Living Options," and for only one (of 20) Direct Service: "Community-Based Medical Services." One significant findings could be expected to occur by chance alone.

For the vast majority of services, there is no statistically significant difference between the regions in terms of the proportion of agencies that offer each service. It should be noted that for a variety of reasons, in particular the different geographical sizes of regions and prevalence of deaf-blindness, availability of services by agency is **not** synonymous with client access to services -- an individual with deaf-blindness in Montana probably has more trouble getting to an agency that his/her counterpart in Connecticut.

TABLE 7.
MEAN LEVEL OF SERVICES OFFERED BY AGENCY TYPE.

			SERVICE OFFERINGS			
Agency Type	N	%	Client Options		Direct Services	
			Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Education	169	23.5	1.97	1.37	13.05	4.94
MH/MR/DD	146	20.3	3.18	1.07	13.76	4.66
Vocational Rehabilitation	199	27.7	2.12	1.14	12.86	4.00
Center for Independent Living	41	5.7	2.71	1.40	12.10	4.47
Advocacy	31	4.3	1.00	1.29	4.35	2.95
Social Service	25	3.5	2.44	1.12	10.84	4.17
Higher Education Plus	91	12.7	1.76	1.40	9.49	5.56
Developmental Disability Council	17	2.4	1.59	1.54	4.76	4.88
Total	719	100.0	2.24	1.37	11.99	5.16

TABLE 8.
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS BY AGENCY.

			TA NEEDS							
			Client Options		Direct Services		Systems		Admin/Prog Service	
Recoded Category	N	%	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Education	169	23.5	2.34	1.65	12.15	7.01	1.83	1.39	5.40	2.82
MH/MR/DD	146	20.3	2.71	1.55	11.80	6.93	1.64	1.41	5.42	2.71
Vocational Rehabilitation	199	27.7	2.42	1.58	11.22	7.23	1.66	1.44	4.93	3.11
Center for Independent Living	41	5.7	2.27	1.73	9.95	7.35	1.68	1.44	5.66	2.98
Advocacy	31	4.3	0.94	1.39	3.19	4.90	1.45	1.52	2.74	2.65
Social Service	25	3.5	2.28	1.54	10.36	7.27	1.36	1.41	5.04	2.84
Higher Education Plus	91	12.7	1.76	1.64	8.20	7.23	1.40	1.44	4.57	2.82
Developmental Disability Council	17	2.4	1.76	1.82	5.71	7.39	1.71	1.49	3.82	2.92
Total	719	100.0	2.28	1.65	10.60	7.34	1.43	1.43	5.02	2.94

TABLE 9.
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES OFFERING EACH SERVICE BY RSA REGION.

	RSA Region										
Service	**I**	**II**	**III**	**IV**	**V**	**VI**	**VII**	**VIII**	**IX**	**X**	**Chi-Square**
Client Outcomes	N / %										
Employment Options	47	51	43	87	45	48	20	45	50	31	.815
	68.1	*69.9*	*62.3*	*67.4*	*57.7*	*67.6*	*71.4*	*67.2*	*68.5*	*50.0*	
Family Support Services	45	59	43	86	49	43	14	38	41	30	.664
	65.2	*80.8*	*62.3*	*66.7*	*62.8*	*60.6*	*50.0*	*56.7*	*56.2*	*48.4*	
Integrated Recreational /Leisure Options	48	36	31	61	42	42	18	44	35	32	.002a
	69.6	*49.3*	*44.9*	*47.3*	*53.8*	*59.2*	*64.3*	*65.7*	*47.9*	*51.6*	
Community Living Options	44	31	23	49	33	33	12	38	22	21	.001a
	63.8	*42.5*	*33.3*	*38.0*	*42.3*	*46.5*	*42.9*	*56.7*	*30.1*	*33.9*	
Direct Services											
Client Assessment/ Evaluation	55	73	59	107	64	55	20	58	61	44	.587
	79.7	*100.0*	*85.5*	*82.9*	*82.1*	*77.5*	*71.4*	*86.6*	*83.6*	*71.0*	
Advocacy	56	66	54	105	60	51	21	47	54	38	.800
	81.1	*90.4*	*78.3*	*81.4*	*76.9*	*71.8*	*75.0*	*70.1*	*74.0*	*61.3*	
Daily Living Skills Training	58	60	56	96	56	52	21	53	54	38	.636
	84.1	*82.2*	*81.2*	*74.4*	*71.8*	*73.2*	*75.0*	*79.1*	*74.0*	*61.3*	
Communication Training	56	66	54	94	57	52	18	51	46	36	.438
	81.2	*90.4*	*78.3*	*72.9*	*73.1*	*73.2*	*64.3*	*76.1*	*63.0*	*58.1*	
Social Skills Training	53	61	54	95	57	54	19	49	48	38	.848
	76.8	*83.6*	*78.3*	*73.6*	*73.1*	*76.1*	*67.9*	*73.1*	*65.8*	*61.3*	
Transition Planning	49	60	51	88	55	48	21	48	45	37	.878
	71.0	*82.2*	*73.9*	*68.2*	*70.5*	*67.6*	*75.0*	*71.6*	*61.6*	*59.7*	
Case Management	48	62	49	89	48	40	19	44	48	37	.330
	69.6	*84.9*	*71.0*	*69.0*	*61.5*	*56.3*	*67.9*	*65.7*	*65.8*	*59.7*	

TABLE 9.
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES OFFERING EACH SERVICE BY RSA REGION, Continued.

	RSA Region										
Direct Services	**I**	**II**	**III**	**IV**	**V**	**VI**	**VII**	**VIII**	**IX**	**X**	**Chi-Square**
Psychological/Social Counseling	43 *62.3*	56 *76.7*	49 *71.0*	88 *68.2*	46 *59.0*	46 *64.8*	17 *60.7*	41 *61.2*	46 *63.0*	20 *32.3*	.100
Job Development/Placement	38 *55.1*	53 *72.6*	46 *66.7*	87 *67.4*	47 *60.3*	49 *69.0*	18 *64.3*	43 *64.2*	47 *64.4*	24 *38.7*	.437
Assistive Technology	39 *56.5*	59 *80.8*	48 *69.6*	78 *60.5*	45 *57.7*	41 *57.7*	20 *71.4*	44 *65.7*	45 *61.6*	32 *51.6*	.637
Mobility Training	43 *62.3*	47 *64.4*	49 *71.0*	78 *60.5*	49 *62.8*	37 *52.1*	17 *60.7*	46 *68.7*	46 *63.0*	36 *58.1*	.243
Job Site Training/Support	34 *49.3*	53 *72.6*	46 *66.7*	82 *63.6*	47 *60.3*	49 *69.0*	18 *64.3*	47 *70.1*	42 *57.5*	29 *46.8*	.363
Educational Services	38 *55.1*	59 *80.8*	43 *62.3*	86 *66.7*	51 *65.4*	41 *57.7*	13 *46.4*	45 *67.2*	39 *53.4*	27 *43.5*	.220
Behavior Management	46 *66.7*	54 *74.0*	40 *58.0*	74 *57.4*	50 *64.1*	44 *62.0*	11 *39.3*	48 *71.6*	38 *52.1*	36 *58.1*	.052
Personal Futures Planning	41 *59.4*	47 *64.4*	42 *60.9*	67 *51.9*	35 *44.9*	36 *50.7*	18 *64.3*	39 *58.2*	40 *54.8*	30 *48.4*	.557
Parent Education/Training	31 *44.9*	48 *65.8*	38 *55.1*	68 *52.7*	40 *51.3*	35 *49.3*	14 *50.0*	36 *53.7*	30 *41.1*	21 *33.9*	.668
Self-Preservation Training	39 *56.5*	42 *57.5*	31 *44.9*	58 *45.0*	34 *43.6*	33 *46.5*	11 *39.3*	34 *50.7*	29 *39.7*	31 *50.0*	.274
Family/Sibling Support	31 *44.9*	46 *63.0*	31 *44.9*	63 *48.8*	37 *47.4*	33 *46.5*	13 *46.4*	24 *35.8*	27 *37.0*	22 *35.5*	.571
Community-Based Medical Services	28 *40.6*	23 *31.5*	15 *21.7*	48 *37.2*	24 *30.8*	21 *29.6*	3 *10.7*	21 *31.3*	15 *20.4*	14 *22.6*	.037a
Financial/Estate Planning	11 *15.9*	15 *20.5*	6 *8.7*	24 *18.6*	13 *16.7*	11 *15.5*	5 *19.9*	12 *17.9*	9 *12.3*	7 *11.3*	.861

a. Chi-square significant at .05 level, degrees of freedom = 9.

Exceptions to the generalization of no statistically significant differences across regions for Client Outcomes and Direct Services are all related to integrating clients with deaf-blindness into the community. These differences are found because Region I, in particular, and Regions VIII, VII, and IV to a lesser extent report that they are leading the way in providing community-based services to individuals with deaf-blindness.

Across RSA regions, agencies, for the most part, indicate no statistically significant difference in their technical assistance needs, Table 10. Within the 4 Client Outcomes, the 20 Direct Services, the 3 Systems Issues, and the 8 Administrative/Programmatic Services, there are only four instances of statistically significant differences. Two of these differences could be expected by chance alone using the .05 level of significance. The statistically significant differences are: within Client Outcomes: "Employment Options" and "Community Living Options;" and within Direct Services: "Case Management" and "Financial/Estate Planning." These differences occur, in great measure, because Regions VII and VIII both expressed particularly high technical assistance needs.

These data suggest that the United States can best be treated as a single geographical unit for the purpose of addressing transitional technical assistance needs. There is no region so different from the rest that its technical assistance needs are greatly more or less than those of other regions.

Sources of External Training and Technical Assistance

The enormous need for technical assistance from agencies that provide direct services to individuals with deaf-blindness is unlikely to diminish over time. In fact, as those with deaf-blindness are increasingly integrated into local communities, the need for technical assistance will probably rise. The question arises: *How are technical assistance needs met*?

Each agency was asked to indicate whether it had obtained training or technical assistance from each of seven potential categories of help (excluding HKNC-TAC). Over a third of the agencies (N = 255, 35.5%) indicated they had no non-HKNC-TAC sources, Table 11. An additional third of the agencies (N = 262, 36.5%) indicated either one or two categories of external technical assistance. When respondents were asked to name their external sources of technical assistance, the vast majority named only a single agency or other entity for each category that was checked. Therefore, checking a category is considered synonymous with utilizing one agency for technical assistance.

TABLE 10.
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES NEEDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BY RSA REGION.

	RSA Region										
Service	**I**	**II**	**III**	**IV**	**V**	**VI**	**VII**	**VIII**	**IX**	**X**	**Chi-Square**
Client Outcomes	N / %										
Employment Options	35	52	36	81	41	42	21	51	50	31	.048a
	50.1	*71.2*	*52.2*	*62.8*	*52.6*	*59.2*	*75.0*	*76.1*	*68.5*	*50.0*	
Family Support Services	38	48	35	72	39	43	19	42	44	36	.550
	55.1	*57.5*	*50.7*	*55.8*	*50.0*	*60.6*	*67.9*	*62.7*	*60.3*	*58.1*	
Integrated Recreational /Leisure Options	40	40	32	75	42	37	19	47	47	24	.110
	58.0	*54.8*	*46.4*	*58.1*	*53.8*	*52.1*	*67.9*	*70.1*	*64.4*	*38.7*	
Community Living Options	31	41	29	74	36	43	17	46	42	24	.015*
	44.9	*56.2*	*42.0*	*57.4*	*46.2*	*60.6*	*60.7*	*68.7*	*57.5*	*38.7*	
Direct Services											
Client Assessment/ Evaluation	35	52	36	79	49	43	18	48	43	33	.702
	50.7	*71.2*	*52.2*	*61.2*	*62.8*	*60.6*	*64.3*	*71.6*	*58.9*	*53.2*	
Advocacy	33	43	33	77	37	36	18	48	45	26	.085
	47.8	*58.8*	*47.8*	*59.7*	*47.4*	*50.7*	*64.3*	*71.6*	*61.6*	*41.9*	
Daily Living Skills Training	40	45	31	71	42	37	19	45	46	29	.158
	58.0	*61.6*	*44.9*	*55.0*	*53.8*	*52.1*	*67.9*	*67.2*	*63.0*	*46.8*	
Communication Training	42	52	38	76	47	36	16	45	44	30	.422
	60.9	*71.2*	*55.1*	*58.9*	*60.3*	*50.7*	*57.1*	*67.2*	*60.3*	*48.4*	
Social Skills Training	38	45	33	76	44	39	19	44	46	30	.279
	55.1	*61.6*	*47.8*	*58.9*	*56.4*	*54.9*	*67.9*	*65.7*	*63.0*	*48.4*	
Transition Planning	33	49	34	77	45	42	20	43	46	32	.211
	47.8	*67.1*	*49.3*	*59.7*	*57.7*	*59.2*	*71.4*	*60.6*	*63.0*	*51.6*	
Case Management	24	41	25	67	34	37	20	34	42	31	.010*
	34.8	*56.2*	*36.2*	*51.2*	*43.6*	*52.1*	*71.4*	*50.7*	*57.5*	*50.0*	

TABLE 10.
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES NEEDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BY RSA REGION, Continued.

	RSA Region										
Service	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Chi-Square
Psychological/Social Counseling	32 *46.4*	44 *60.3*	32 *46.4*	71 *55.0*	39 *50.0*	39 *54.9*	18 *64.3*	39 *58.2*	42 *57.5*	24 *38.7*	.721
Job Development/Placement	39 *56.5*	50 *68.5*	33 *47.8*	72 *55.8*	41 *52.6*	42 *59.2*	19 *67.9*	43 *60.6*	47 *64.4*	28 *45.2*	.436
Assistive Technology	39 *56.5*	56 *76.7*	39 *56.5*	79 *61.2*	45 *57.7*	38 *53.5*	20 *71.4*	49 *73.1*	48 *65.8*	30 *48.4*	.774
Mobility Training	36 *52.2*	44 *60.3*	31 *44.9*	62 *48.1*	43 *55.1*	32 *45.1*	16 *57.1*	46 *68.7*	42 *57.5*	28 *45.2*	.450
Job Site Training/Support	37 *53.6*	48 *65.8*	32 *46.4*	70 *54.3*	43 *55.1*	42 *59.2*	19 *67.9*	43 *60.6*	49 *67.1*	27 *43.5*	.219
Educational Services	35 *50.7*	40 *54.8*	29 *42.0*	73 *43.9*	38 *48.7*	28 *39.4*	14 *50.0*	41 *61.2*	36 *49.3*	23 *37.1*	.491
Behavior Management	33 *47.8*	39 *53.4*	31 *44.9*	65 *50.4*	44 *56.4*	39 *54.9*	16 *57.1*	43 *60.6*	40 *54.8*	30 *48.4*	.298
Personal Futures Planning	33 *47.8*	39 *53.4*	34 *49.3*	75 *58.1*	36 *46.2*	40 *56.3*	20 *71.4*	39 *58.2*	43 *58.9*	32 *51.6*	.478
Parent Education/Training	31 *44.9*	47 *64.3*	33 *47.8*	71 *55.0*	41 *52.6*	41 *57.7*	21 *75.0*	42 *62.7*	42 *57.5*	23 *37.1*	.632
Self-Preservation Training	29 *42.0*	40 *54.8*	28 *40.6*	65 *50.4*	35 *44.9*	37 *52.1*	15 *53.6*	41 *61.2*	42 *57.5*	29 *46.8*	.167
Family/Sibling Support	29 *42.0*	41 *56.2*	27 *39.1*	67 *51.9*	38 *48.7*	39 *54.9*	19 *67.9*	42 *62.7*	42 *57.5*	24 *38.7*	.255
Community-Based Medical Services	18 *26.1*	26 *35.6*	17 *24.6*	43 *33.3*	22 *28.2*	27 *38.0*	8 *28.6*	22 *32.8*	30 *41.1*	16 *25.8*	.664
Financial/Estate Planning	22 *31.9*	28 *38.4*	18 *26.1*	44 *34.1*	22 *28.2*	31 *43.7*	15 *53.6*	32 *47.8*	33 *45.2*	15 *24.2*	.010a

TABLE 10.
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES NEEDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BY RSA REGION, Continued.

	RSA Region										
Service	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Chi-Square
Systems Issues											
Maintaining Interagency Collaboration	28 *40.6*	45 *61.6*	32 *46.4*	71 *55.0*	47 *60.3*	36 *50.7*	20 *71.4*	47 *70.1*	45 *61.6*	33 *53.2*	.105
Initiating Interagency Collaboration	28 *40.6*	44 *60.3*	31 *44.9*	72 *55.8*	48 *61.5*	39 *54.9*	18 *64.3*	47 *70.1*	44 *60.3*	30 *48.4*	.152
Establishing Interagency Direction/Focus	28 *40.6*	43 *58.9*	29 *42.0*	63 *48.8*	43 *55.1*	35 *49.3*	19 *67.9*	42 *62.7*	43 *58.9*	29 *46.8*	.446
Administrative/Programmatic											
Personnel Training	51 *73.9*	62 *84.9*	44 *63.8*	98 *76.0*	53 *67.9*	53 *74.7*	22 *78.6*	59 *83.1*	54 *74.0*	37 *59.7*	.155
Public Education/Awareness	53 *76.8*	55 *75.3*	47 *68.1*	91 *70.5*	52 *66.7*	50 *70.4*	23 *82.1*	55 *82.1*	54 *74.0*	33 *53.2*	.348
Funding	53 *76.8*	50 *68.5*	49 *71.0*	88 *68.2*	55 *70.5*	54 *76.1*	21 *75.0*	56 *83.6*	46 *63.0*	40 *64.5*	.178
Legislation/Regulations	45 *65.2*	44 *60.3*	41 *59.4*	77 *59.7*	45 *57.7*	47 *66.2*	22 *78.6*	48 *71.6*	53 *72.6*	33 *53.2*	.225
Personnel Recruitment/ Supervision	39 *56.5*	38 *52.1*	33 *47.8*	75 *58.1*	46 *59.0*	44 *62.0*	18 *64.3*	52 *77.6*	45 *61.6*	31 *50.0*	.076
Population Identification/ Registration	37 *53.6*	44 *60.3*	35 *50.7*	69 *53.5*	41 *52.6*	47 *66.2*	15 *53.6*	48 *71.6*	46 *63.0*	21 *33.9*	.067
Management Style	37 *53.6*	37 *50.7*	26 *37.7*	63 *48.8*	36 *46.2*	40 *56.3*	15 *53.6*	46 *68.7*	44 *60.3*	23 *37.1*	.054
Developing Case Management	31 *44.9*	37 *50.7*	31 *44.9*	71 *55.0*	36 *46.2*	42 *59.2*	14 *50.0*	34 *50.7*	45 *61.6*	20 *32.3*	.143

a. Chi-square significant at .05 level, degrees of freedom = 9.

TABLE 11.
(OTHER-THAN-HKNC-TAC) SOURCES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, N = 719.

Technical Assistance Source	Number of Agencies	Percent of Agencies
Regional, state, local training, dissemination efforts	262	36.4
University training programs	252	35.0
Other technical assistance programs	228	31.7
Government grants	144	20.0
Parent groups	121	16.8
Other	82	11.4
Private foundations	77	10.7

Most non-HKNC-TAC technical assistance is obtained from "Regional, state, and local training and dissemination efforts" (36.4%), "University training programs" (35.0), and "Other technical-assistance programs" (31.7%). These three sources provide almost two-thirds of the non-HKNC/TAC technical assistance (742/1166 = 63.6%). The remaining third is provided by "Government grants" (20%), "Parent groups" (16.8%), "Other" sources (11.4%), and "Private foundations" (10.7%).

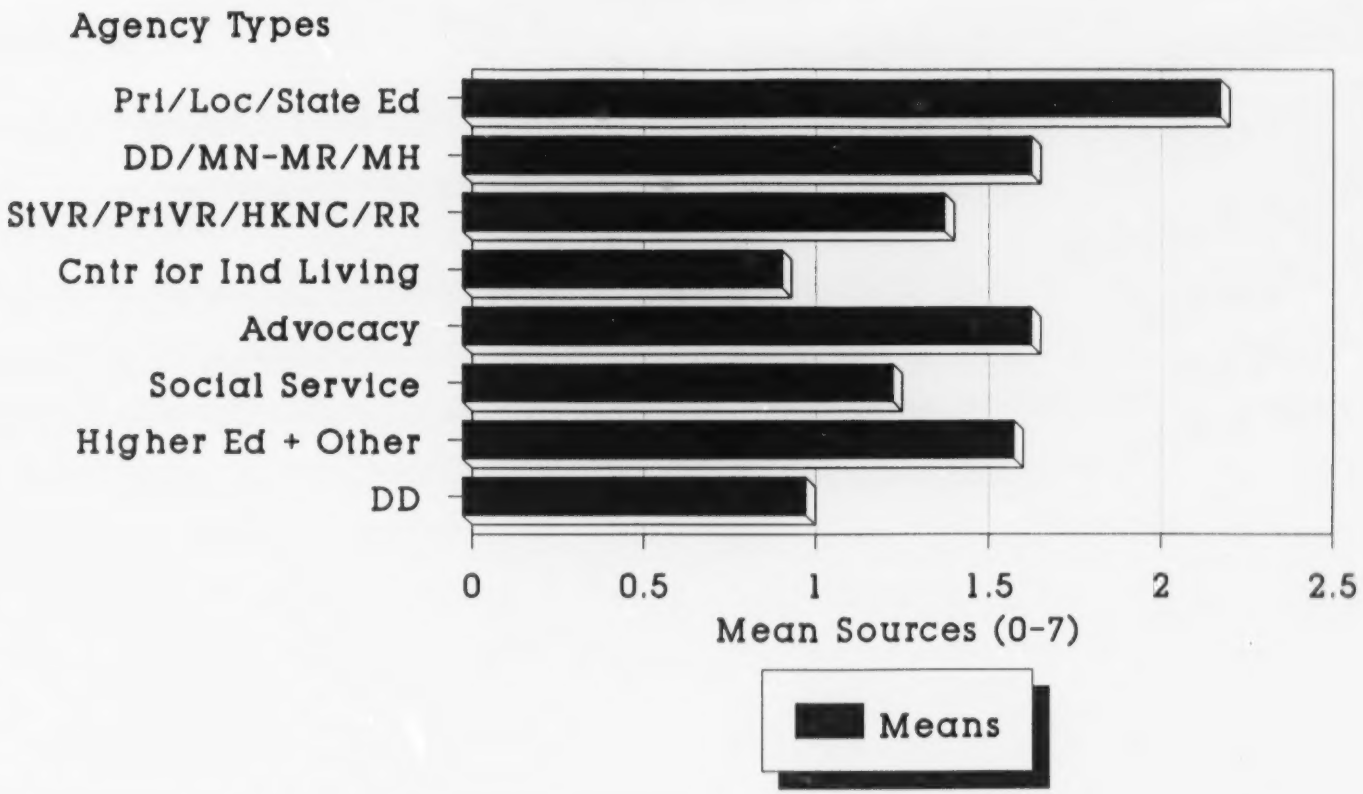
The survey also considered whether different types of agencies had differential access to technical assistance, Figure 1. A significant difference between agency types was found using an F-test and 7 degrees of freedom ($p < .0001$). In other words, chance does not explain why "Private, local, and state education" agencies make the greatest use of technical assistance, and why "Centers for Independent Living" and "DD Councils" have the least access. These findings cannot be explained by whether agencies offer many or few direct services. For example, "Advocacy" agencies offer among the fewest types of direct services, yet these agencies are near the top of use of external sources of technical assistance, cf. Table 7. Nor can they be explained by differences in the expressed need for technical assistance, cf. Table 8. The explanation seems to lie in the fact that **there are real differences between agency types in how interested or able they are in obtaining technical assistance for transitional services for youth with deaf-blindness.**

Is non-HKNC-TAC technical assistance differently used across the 10 RSA regions? Region X makes the greatest use (mean = 2.23 sources of technical assistance), but **overall there is no significant difference between the several regions in securing technical assistance**, F-test, 9 degrees of freedom, Figure 2.

Figure 1

Sources of TA by Agency Type

Non-HKNC/TAC, Mean of Source Types

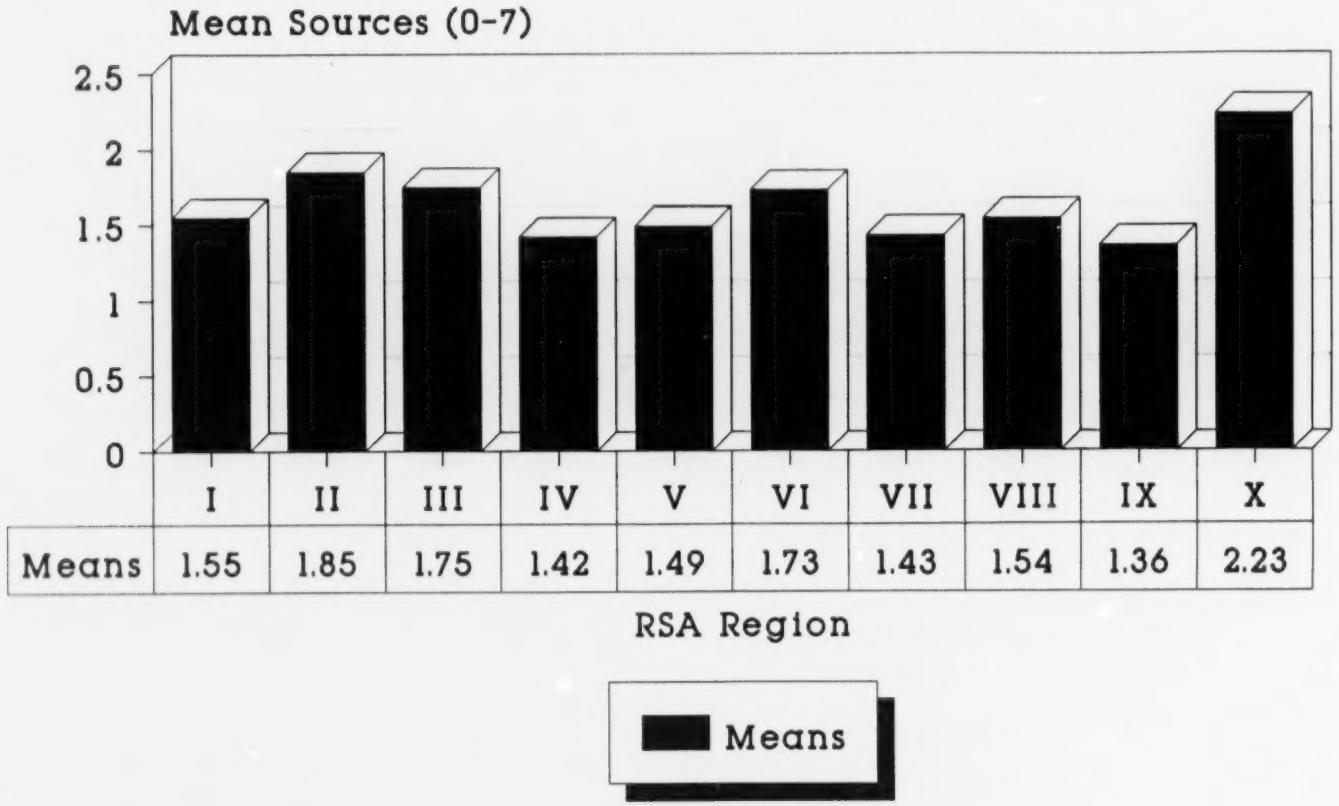


1990-91 HKNC-TAC Needs Assessment Survey
N= 719
F= 4.93, Sig.= <.0001, DF= 7

Figure 2

Sources of TA by Region

Non-HKNC/TAC, Mean Source Types



1990-91 HKNC-TAC Needs Assessment Survey
N= 719
F= 1.76, Sig.= .07, DF= 9

A Factor Analysis of Direct Service Provision Responses

It would not be expected that every agency would offer every direct service to individuals with deaf-blindness, even within the broad categories employed in this survey. To be efficient and to offer the best overall service level, agencies specialize by building strength in some areas but not in others. This specialization results in agencies offering services in combinations. Two polar types might be identified that are of particular interest in light of professional trends and federal mandates encouraging community-integrated transitional services for individuals with deaf-blindness and other severe disabilities. The first polar type organizes service provision along facility-based habilitation and skill preparation lines. Integration of individuals into community settings is expected to occur, but these services are offered separately from more traditional service lines. For example, let us consider traditional vocational programs such as sheltered workshops and day activity centers. These programs are typically provided to groups of individuals in sheltered and segregated settings. When they are "ready" for community-integrated services, they are referred to another program within the agency or to yet another agency for these services. As a result, services may be fragmented and disjointed across personnel and agency characteristics and expertise.

The second polar type organizes service provision to support an individual's integration into community settings. Service groupings do not isolate community-based services from traditional services but instead blend them so that all services are infused within community-integrated outcomes. Programs offering community-based instruction, supported employment, supported living, and integrated recreation programs in community settings are examples of this polar type.

The third possibility is that neither distinct polar types of service provision occurs. Rather there is some kind of blend. For example, programs may be attempting to convert their facility-based vocational services, downsize their institutions, or support home school initiatives.

How do agencies actually group their transitional services? This analysis shows that agencies continue to group services along traditional service lines. And that little progress has yet been made in organizing services to optimize the integration of individuals with deaf-blindness into community options.

Using SPSS/PC+ 3.1, a principal components analysis was performed on the 24 x 24 matrix of Pearson product-moment correlations indicating which Client Outcomes and Direct Services are offered by service agencies, Table 12. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = .90, indicates the matrix is suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett's test of sphericity, which follows a chi-square distribution, was computed and found to be statistically significant, chi-square (N = 719) = 6880.3, $p < .00001$. The decision on the number of factors to be retained was based on the scree test (Cattell, 1966), and the meaningfulness of factors. Four factors were retained and rotated to an orthogonal structure using the varimax criterion. The analysis converged after 7 iterations. Factor loadings of .395 or greater are retained, Table 13.

Four factors were identified; the first of which explained most of the common variance. Factor 1, loading on 10 items, was defined as Isolated Skills Services. The items with the highest correlations are: "Social Skills Training" (item 9, r = .77), "Communications Training" (item 10, r =.77), and "Daily Living Skills Training" (item 7, r = .73). The first factor, with an eigenvalue of 7.38, explained 30.8% of the common variance, more than half of all the variance explained by these four factors.

Factor 2, loading on seven items, was defined as Employment Services. The services most heavily represented on this factor were "Job Development/Placement" (item 16, r = .83), "Job Site Training/Support" (item 17, r = .79) and "Employment Options" (item 2, r = .75). The second factor, having an eigenvalue of 2.10 explained only 8.8% of the common variance.

Factor 3, loading on three items, is described as Community-Living Services. The common dimension in this factor relates to: the "Community-Living Options" (item 1, r = .80), "Integrated Recreational/Leisure Options" (item 3, r = .66), and "Community-Based Medical Services" (item 20, r = .47). The third factor, with an eigenvalue of 1.77, explains 7.4% of the common variance.

Factor 4, loading on four items, deals with Support for Parents and Families Services. The most important items are: "Family Sibling Support" (item 22, r = .80), "Parent Education/Training" (item 21, r = .75), and "Family Support Services" (item 4, r = .58). The fourth factor, with an eigenvalue of 6.5 explains 6.5% of the common variance.

TABLE 12

PEARSON PRODUCT-MOMENT CORRELATIONS BETWEEN AGENCY SERVICE: ,N=719.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
1. Community Living Options																								
2. Community Employment Options	.32																							
3. Integrated Rec-Leisure Options	.48	.24																						
4. Family Support Services	.30	.22	.34																					
5. Client Assessment-Evaluation	.16	.34	.23	.23																				
6. Educational Services	.00	.15	.11	.19	.32																			
7. Daily Living Skills	.34	.31	.39	.23	.57	.30																		
8. Psychological-Social	.12	.30	.19	.24	.47	.33	.43																	
9. Social Skills Training	.31	.28	.36	.27	.55	.31	.72	.52																
10. Communication Training	.20	.22	.34	.23	.49	.40	.64	.45	.66															
11. Mobility Training	.11	.25	.17	.15	.45	.29	.54	.39	.49	.50														
12. Self-Preservation Training	.31	.20	.31	.24	.37	.15	.46	.34	.50	.42	.41													
13. Behavior Management	.30	.22	.40	.28	.46	.33	.48	.36	.57	51	37	.54												
14. Transition Planning	.20	.36	.23	.28	.42	.30	.39	.38	.47	.40	.40	.37	.43											
15. Personal Futures Planning	.29	.34	.25	.26	.26	.14	.29	.30	.34	.29	.29	.37	.34	.48										
16. Job Development-Placement	.12	.64	.12	.10	.33	.21	.34	.31	.33	.28	.29	.19	.26	.39	.32									
17. Job-Site Training-Supported Employment	.12	.59	.13	.13	.40	.23	.38	.30	.37	.32	.32	.23	.30	.41	.31	.78								
18. Advocacy	.12	.20	.13	.20	.06	.05	.15	.10	.13	.14	.09	.10	.06	.18	.20	.24	.26							
19. Assistive Technology	.06	.23	.04	.15	.29	.35	.21	.27	.23	.28	.32	.12	.11	.34	.23	.32	.35	.21						
20. Community-Based Medical Services	.33	.15	.28	.17	.18	.11	.25	.18	.26	.25	.18	.27	.26	.15	17	.19	.18	.15	.10					
21. Parent Education-Training	.02	-.06	.15	.32	.01	.16	.08	.12	.16	.20	.11	.24	.31	.22	.15	.04	.06	.08	.11	.09				
22. Family-Sibling Support	.16	.56	.19	.47	.07	.11	.16	.19	.24	.18	.15	.23	.24	.23	.19	.07	.08	.22	.16	.17	.50			
23. Financial Estate Planning	.19	.10	.24	.19	.06	.01	.13	.14	.14	.12	.10	.18	.18	.16	.23	.11	.10	.17	.13	.24	.20	.27		
24. Case Management	.26	.33	.23	.25	.33	.14	.40	.30	.36	.29	.30	.30	.29	.36	.32	.34	.35	.29	.27	.29	.14	.29	.21	

Table 13
VARIMAX FACTOR ROTATION OF 24 SERVICES OFFERED BY AGENCIES N = 719

		Factor				
Item #	**Item**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	h_2
9.	Social Skills Training	.77				.71
10.	Communication Training	.77				.64
7.	Daily Living Skills Training	.73				.69
5.	Client Assessment/Evaluation	.70				.58
11.	Mobility Training	.68				.50
13.	Behavior Management	.64				.57
8.	Psychological/Social Counseling	.61				.44
6.	Educational Services	.56				.42
12.	Self-Preservation Training	.54		.40		.49
14.	Transition Planning	.50	.40			.48
16.	Job Development/Placement		.83			.75
17.	Job Site Training/Support		.79			.72
2.	Employment Options		.75			.67
18.	Advocacy		.46			.34
24.	Case Management		.45			.41
19.	Assistive Technology		.45			.50
15.	Personal Futures Planning		.40			.37
1.	Community Living Options			.80		.67
3.	Integrated Recreational /Leisure Options			.66		.54
20.	Community-Based Medical Service			.47		.29
22.	Family/Sibling Support				.80	.66
21.	Parent Education/Training				.75	.60
4.	Family Support Services				.58	.45
23.	Financial/Estate Planning				.44	.31

Most of the variation in the correlation matrix of services agencies offer is explained by a single factor defined as Isolated Skills Services. Agencies tend to offer these 10 services, or some significant portion of them, as a group. The three remaining factors, in combination, explain a bit less variation than the first factor. The one that explains the most variation is Vocational Services. Thus, the traditional service groupings of Isolated Skills and Vocational provide the basic dimensions along which services are offered.

Community-Based Services forms its own factor, independent of all the others. Agencies that offer Isolated Skills and Vocational services tend to do so separately from offering Community-Based Services. **These data suggest that professional literature, federal and state legislation and policies and technical assistance have not yet been successful in encouraging agencies to reorganize service provision to holistically integrate isolated skills into community-integrated employment, living, and recreation options**.

A Factor Analysis of Technical Assistance Needs

If agencies provide services in groups, it may be reasonable to expect that they will indicate a need for technical assistance in groups, perhaps even following the same lines. To consider this question a principal components analysis was performed on the 35 x 35 matrix of Pearson product-moment correlations indicating in which Client Outcomes, Direct Services, Systems Issues, and Administrative/Programmatic Services agencies indicated a need for technical assistance, Table 14. SPSS/PC+ determined the matrix to be ill-suited for factor analysis based on the high inter-item correlations.

These findings indicated that there is a single trait underlying the need for technical assistance. Some agencies express great need for technical assistance, while others express little or no need at all. The data do not permit a determination of what causes this difference.

TABLE 14
MATRIX OF PEARSON MOMENT CORRELATIONS: AGENCIES NEEDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
1. Community Living Options																											
2. Community Employment Options	.61																										
3. Integrated Rec-Leisure Options	.63	.57																									
4. Family Support Services	.58	.56	.61																								
5. Client Assessment-Evaluation	.42	.55	.42	.46																							
6. Educational Services	.42	.47	.49	.49	.60																						
7. Daily Living Skills	.51	.51	.54	.49	.70	.62																					
8. Psychological-Social	.46	.52	.44	.51	.64	.59	.62																				
9. Social Skills Training	.53	.53	.53	.53	.67	.61	.75	.72																			
10. Communication Training	.46	.54	.51	.49	.66	.60	.70	.65	.71																		
11. Mobility Training	.46	.47	.48	.41	.64	.53	.68	.60	.66	.66																	
12. Self-Preservation Training	.53	.49	.55	.53	.53	.51	.65	.61	.68	.63	.62																
13. Behavior Management	.49	.49	.54	.52	.59	.52	.63	.59	.69	.65	.59	.66															
14. Transition Planning	.52	.59	.51	.55	.61	.55	.58	.60	.64	.61	.57	.62	.63														
15. Personal Futures Planning	.54	.57	.51	.58	.54	.51	.57	.60	.63	.58	.55	.63	.60	.75													
16. Job Development-Placement	.42	.66	.44	.45	.52	.45	.47	.52	.52	.53	.44	.46	.45	.57	.55												
17. Job-Site Training-Supported Employment	.42	.66	.43	.45	.52	.44	.47	.53	.53	.53	.45	.45	.46	.57	.53	.91											
18. Advocacy	.40	.46	.49	.49	.49	.45	.48	.50	.53	.48	.43	.44	.45	.52	.51	.52	.52										
19. Assistive Technology	.36	.48	.41	.43	.46	.46	.45	.47	.47	.51	.42	.45	.43	.56	.51	.58	.58	.55									
20. Community-Based Medical Services	.45	.36	.45	.42	.36	.43	.42	.42	.45	.40	.42	.47	.42	.46	.47	.45	.44	.47	.49								
21. Parent Education-Training	.40	.37	.46	.54	.41	.45	.41	.49	.50	.42	.43	.51	.46	.51	.52	.48	.47	.52	.53	.59							
22. Family-Sibling Support	.43	.38	.46	.50	.41	.43	.45	.51	.52	.44	.45	.52	.47	.52	.53	.45	.45	.53	.51	.57	.76						
23. Financial Estate Planning	.43	.38	.44	.42	.31	.35	.35	.41	.42	.36	.36	.47	.42	.49	.49	.45	.44	.44	.46	.68	.56	.64					
24. Case Management	.41	.46	.45	.48	.49	.44	.50	.50	.54	.46	.47	.45	.47	.52	.50	.50	.51	.59	.50	.48	.48	.54	.49				
25. Initiating Interagency Collaboration	.40	.45	.43	.47	.46	.39	.38	.44	.47	.40	.38	.39	.40	.57	.44	.48	.48	.53	.48	.43	.51	.48	.40	.51			
26. Establishing Interagcency Direction/Focus	.40	.41	.43	.40	.42	.38	.37	.44	.47	.39	.38	.41	.41	.54	.49	.45	.45	.53	.47	.43	.51	.49	.41	.50	.87		
27. Maintaining Interagency Collaboration	.38	.40	.42	.47	.46	.39	.39	.44	.48	.40	.38	.40	.41	.54	.47	.46	.47	.54	.49	.42	.51	.50	.41	.50	.90	.91	
28. Personnel Recruitment/Supervision	.33	.34	.38	.34	.39	.35	.38	.37	.42	.43	.37	.40	.43	.40	.36	.37	.37	.40	.35	.37	.34	.38	.34	.42	.36	.36	.34

Table 14, Continued	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29. Personnel Training	.39	.40	.39	.39	.45	.39	.43	.44	.46	.50	.43	.46	.45	.46	.41	.43	.42	.39	.43	.34	.35	.38	.33	.44	.34	.34	.33
30. Funding	.31	.30	.31	.31	.32	.28	.29	.35	.35	.34	.30	.34	.33	.33	.35	.34	.34	.31	.36	.32	.34	.36	.34	.31	.33	.33	.34
31. Legislation-Regulations	.38	.33	.39	.40	.38	.36	.40	.36	.41	.37	.33	.42	.38	.41	.40	.37	.37	.46	.38	.38	.39	.41	.39	.43	.39	.42	.40
32. Management Style	.36	.34	.36	.37	.28	.31	.31	.36	.43	.34	.31	.37	.36	.37	.37	.38	.38	.39	.34	.37	.35	.35	.35	.39	.39	.40	.39
33. Population Indentification/Registry	.35	.29	.32	.39	.35	.31	.36	.37	.39	.33	.30	.34	.33	.40	.38	.36	.36	.42	.35	.36	.37	.36	.37	.38	.38	.40	.40
34. Developing Case Management Systems	.33	.31	.31	.36	.31	.32	.33	.36	.37	.31	.30	.33	.32	.36	.41	.33	.34	.36	.30	.31	.32	.36	.32	.48	.38	.39	.39
35. Public Education Awareness	.35	.33	.33	.36	.33	.34	.34	.35	.38	.33	.27	.31	.32	.38	.39	.37	.38	.47	.37	.31	.40	.39	.32	.40	.40	.41	.42

Table 14, continued

	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
29. Personnel Training	.70						
30. Funding	.51	.57					
31. Legislation-Regulations	.58	.55	.57				
32. Management Style	.63	.54	.48	.63			
33. Population Indentification/Registry	.52	.50	.47	.58	.54		
34. Developing Case Management Systems	.49	.50	.41	.55	.58	.54	
35. Public Education Awareness	.50	.50	.46	.58	.55	.53	.53

Conclusions

Agencies that provide transitional services to individuals with deaf-blindness face a daunting task. They must recruit, train, and guide service providers in working with a population that is both heterogeneous and low-incidence. They must continually face service delivery issues that are impacted by new research, technology, and federal and state policies. These data show that the surveyed agencies are very committed to their work. They offer many services to many clients, and they express a desire to both improve their current services offerings and expand agency capabilities into new client outcomes and service areas. To carry out these goals agencies are requesting help -- a great deal of technical assistance. On average each agency, among the 719 agencies surveyed, expressed a need for technical assistance in 20 separate areas. These numbers put instances of current technical assistance requirements nationally near 15,000 among agencies participating in this survey! In addition, over 30% of the contacted agencies did not respond to this questionnaire, so the need may be greater than these numbers indicate. Just as important, in 40% of the instances where a need for technical assistance was displayed, the level of need was described as "a lot." The question naturally arises: *Can agencies ever become "competent" in providing quality transitional services, given continually changing service quality indicators, personnel shortages and turn-over rates, fiscal constraints, and low-incidence population concerns*? One answer may be that technical assistance will **always** be essential simply to maintain current service levels. As long as personnel shortages and turn-over rates exist and fiscal and legislation constraints continue, it may be unreasonable to expect technical assistance efforts **alone** to result in quality programs nationally for **all** individuals with deaf-blindness. We believe that technical assistance efforts may be best expended by using technical assistance to develop limited model demonstration processes and sites

across **all** client options in **all** RSA regions. In order to build capacity of personnel in model demonstration sites these technical assistance efforts must be provided within state and local level interagency efforts.

Where will agencies receive the technical assistance they need? These data reveal that the number of entities that provide technical assistance is limited and that some agency types make considerably less than average use of what is available. The data recommend a continuing national attention to providing technical assistance -- it is a resource that is much in demand, but is short in supply. In addition, the need for a national clearinghouse as a focal point of technical assistance resources and to encourage collaboration among national and regional technical assistance providers is essential.

It is gratifying to find that there are few statistically significant differences across the 10 RSA regions on the variables included in this survey. Although some regions self-report leadership in selected areas, the broad picture portrays a reasonably even national distribution of services and technical assistance needs. This conclusion does not imply that the level of services for individuals with deaf-blindness has achieved sufficiency. It does mean that the nation is progressing evenly across its entire geographical base.

As troubling as any finding in this survey, is the way in which agencies continue to organize the constellation of services they offer. The effects of service organization are important: isolated skills training, and readiness approaches to service delivery are outdated and ineffectual. The only way to achieve community-integration is to infuse **all** transitional services within community-integrated adult outcomes. The data indicate that professional literature, federal and state legislation and policies encouraging integration of individuals with deaf-blindness into the community has not yet had much effect on how agencies group direct services. Isolated skills continue to be offered separately from community-integrated outcomes and supports. Future

funding priorities and technical assistance activities must aggressively promote **holistic** and visionary client planning (e.g., personal futures planning, supported living, supported employment, home school initiatives) along with **broad** systemic and administrative interagency change supports.

These results offer both hope and concern. Federal and state agencies and technical assistance providers must define: 1) effective models of technical assistance provision for agencies providing direct services to individuals with deaf-blindness which are equally accessible to all agencies nationally; 2) how to reward technical assistance providers who share resources and collaborate on technical assistance activities and resources; and 3) how to ensure that all technical assistance efforts result in agency service re-organization along community-integrated service and client-centered planning lines.

This study does not answer the question of why some agencies indicate very high needs for technical assistance while others appear to need very little. Are there some agencies that have achieved quality client outcomes and can serve as models for the rest of the country? Are agencies that indicate technical assistance needs the ones that are most aggressively pursuing community-integrated outcomes for their clients? These are questions are beyond the scope of this database, but are worthy of future investigation.

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